



David B. Thornburgh

David Thornburgh is a nationally recognized “civic entrepreneur” who, in the course of career, has launched a series of innovative high impact initiatives to tackle tough community problems.

He was named President and CEO of the Committee of Seventy, the Philadelphia-based good government group, in November, 2014. Founded in 1903, Seventy has long been a champion for a better political process, better government, and engaged and informed citizens, in Philadelphia and in Pennsylvania. Among its many accomplishments, Seventy was instrumental in enacting campaign contribution limits and a powerful Board of Ethics—among the toughest in the nation—in Philadelphia after the “pay to play” scandals came to light in 2007.

Thornburgh came to Seventy from the University of Pennsylvania’s Fels Institute of Government, where he had served as Executive Director since 2008. While at Fels he doubled applications to the program, launched an innovative hybrid Executive MPA program and, during Fels’ 75th Anniversary campaign in 2012 quadrupled alumni giving and carried out 12 public programs that attracted over 1,200 alumni and political and community leaders. He also created a national Public Policy Challenge student competition in partnership with Governing magazine that drew teams from 12 top universities.

Thornburgh served as Executive Director of the Economy League of Greater Philadelphia from 1994 to 2006 where, under his leadership, the League became one of the nation’s best regional “think and do tanks.” There he co-founded Graduate! Philadelphia, an innovative approach to encourage adults to come back to college to complete their degree that has since been replicated in over a dozen communities across the country. He also co-founded Campus Philly, an organization dedicated to increasing the magnetic pull of the Philadelphia region for college students and young college graduates. From 1988 to 1994 he served as Director of the Wharton Small Business Development Center, the consulting and training arm of The Wharton School’s Entrepreneurial Center, where he founded The Enterprise Center, a nationally recognized business accelerator targeted to minority businesses, and co-founded the Philadelphia 100, an annual celebration of the region’s fastest growing privately held companies.

Thornburgh has received a number of awards for his professional and civic leadership. In 2006 he was recognized as one of the 101 most trusted and respected civic “connectors” in the Philadelphia area by LEADERSHIP Philadelphia. In 2000, he was awarded an Eisenhower Fellowship and traveled to Australia and New Zealand to learn about entrepreneurial development and public management in those countries.

In his off hours, Thornburgh plays guitar and pedal steel guitar with two local bands, Reckless Amateurs (where his wife Rebecca is lead singer) and The Miners. Born and raised in Pittsburgh, PA, he remains a Steelers, Pirates and Penguins fan even after many years living in Philadelphia.

Thornburgh holds a B.A. in political science from Haverford College and a master's degree in public policy from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government.